WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Delay in Development of Indigenous LCA and Upgradation of MiG-21

*603. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE to pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been inordinate delay in development of indigenous Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) and upgradation of MiG-21 aircraft;

(b) whether it is a fact that due to this delay the Indian Air Force has suffered a lot in air crashes and killings of pilots; and

(c) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) There has been some delay in LCA Project which is mainly due to lack of development experience, non-availability of ready infrastructure, foreign exchange (FE) crunch of 1992, sanctions imposed by USA in 1998 and technological complexities. The first technology demonstrator has flow on 4th January, 2001 and successfully demonstrated to international experts during Aero India 2001. Further development is in progress for its timely induction in Indian Air Force. The upgradtion of MiG-21 aircraft was delayed due to various technical problems, integration and achieving performance parameters on two prototypes at Russia. The series upgradation and delivering to Indian Air Force has commenced at Hindustan Aeronautics Limited.

(b) Non-availability of LCA and delay in upgradation of MiG-21 aircraft has not resulted in any way in increase of flying accidents.

(c) Does not arise.

Infiltration of Terrorists from Nepal and Bangladesh

*605. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the North-Eastern and Eastern States were recently alerted about the possible infiltration of hard core terrorists from Nepal and Bangladesh;

(b) if so, details thereof;